

A Frontier of Fear: Terrorism and Social Tension along Virginia's Western Waters, 1742–1775

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Fear's Reflection

On a summer day in the wake of General Braddock's defeat along the Monongahela, a small band of Shawnee warriors prepared to strike the Draper's Meadows settlement, located on the western waters of Virginia's frontier. This settlement represented English expansion and foreshadowed the movement of more Europeans into the region. While no major concentration of Amerindians was present in the immediate vicinity, Draper's Meadows was positioned in an area that the Iroquois had claimed until the 1744 Treaty of Lancaster in which they relinquished their purported control over the region and made the area open for European settlement. However, while primarily uninhabited by Amerindians, the newly opened backcountry in which Draper's Meadows was positioned was where the Shawnee and Cherokee, among other tribes, hunted game and through which they traveled when going to war with one another.¹

The Shawnee were familiar with the region, and Draper's Meadows' location made it a relatively easy target. Relying on tried and true tactics, the Shawnee followed the Ohio, Kanawha, and New Rivers until they positioned themselves to strike Draper's Meadows. As the majority of the men in the settlement went into the fields to work, they left behind the influential land speculator James Patton, a few other men, and the women and children; the settlement lay nearly defenseless. Without warning, the Shawnee launched their surprise attack, killing James Patton, Mrs. George Draper, Casper Barrier, and either one or two of John Draper's children. According to one account the Shawnee murdered the child or children by "knocking their brains out on the ends of the Cabin logs." The Shawnee also left wounded James Cull, and they took as captives Mary Draper Ingles, Mrs. John Draper, and Henry Leonard, along with one or two children. The Shawnee burned the settlement and then disappeared just as quickly as they had appeared. In order to instill fear among the survivors, the Shawnee

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took the time to stop at Philip Barger's home approximately one mile west of Draper's Meadows. The raiders killed Barger, decapitated him, put his head in a sack, and then took it to Philip Lybrook's home where they threw the sack on the porch and told Mrs. Lybrook to open it in order to find an acquaintance. The Shawnee then successfully made their way back to their villages in the Ohio River Valley.²

While the Shawnee raid on Draper's Meadows became the most famous Amerindian attack along Virginia's western waters, due mainly to Mary Draper Ingles's account of her dramatic escape from captivity and four-hundred-mile trek back home, such raids along the backcountry were quite common throughout the French and Indian War. William Preston kept a record of frontier settlers killed, wounded, and taken captive between October 1754 and April 1758. During that time he recorded over three hundred names of frontier settlers who became casualties as a result of Amerindian raids along the frontier. Twenty years later, in the midst of the American Revolution, Preston still viewed the Shawnee as "Our old Inveterate Enemies" as they continued to plague Virginia's frontier.³

With such raids continuing to threaten the region through the American Revolution and into the early national period, the threat of Amerindian attack quickly became a part of frontier life within the New River Valley. Fear came to dominate not only imperial policy, as England began to open the lands west of the Blue Ridge Mountains in the 1720s to speculators and settlers, but fear also began to shape the New River Valley's society as settlers strove to effectively combat the terror Amerindians offered. This fear helped shape the frontier as settlers looked to the gentry to protect them and as settlers embraced an aggressive stance in relation to Amerindians along the frontier. In essence, the tactics Amerindians resorted to, as they attempted to stem the tide of European encroachment on new lands west of the Blue Ridge Mountains during and following the French and Indian War, created an atmosphere among the region's white inhabitants that directly impacted the region's society and culture. Such tactics ultimately became the driving force behind social tensions between gentry and common folk as both groups embraced somewhat of a different worldview and different ideals as to how to appropriately handle the Amerindian threat. This culture of fear along the frontier, possibly more than any other force, shaped the region's social environment as fear was fostered particularly by the Shawnee's and, to a lesser extent, the Cherokee's, conscious decision to use terrorist-style tactics as they raided settlements along the western waters. In this way, terrorist tactics helped to shape Virginia's backcountry

society as it brought residential instability to the region, exacerbated social tensions as a general assault on the culture of deference unfolded, created an environment in which rumor more than fact affected the settlers' movement patterns and the region's military affairs, brought about insubordination in the region's militia forces, and produced a military doctrine and mentality of preemption.⁴

Fear's Emergence

The New River Valley and the region containing Virginia's western waters began to actively be settled by English, Scots, Irish, and Germans, along with free blacks and slaves of African descent, in the 1740s. However, events unfolding in the 1720s surrounding Governor Spotswood's and then Governor Gooch's opening of the Shenandoah Valley were essential in paving the way for England's efforts to settle Virginia's western waters, and these events bring to light the first way in which Amerindian efforts to contain English expansion affected British imperial policy. In his work *The Planting of New Virginia*, Warren Hofstra explores the ways in which the settlement of the Shenandoah Valley, which eventually allowed further European expansion into the New River Valley, was tied to an imperial policy driven by fear. Hofstra suggests that a conscious fear on the part of the Board of Trade, Governors Spotswood and Gooch, as well as many of eastern Virginia's inhabitants, facilitated the manner in which England extended its claims over the Virginia backcountry.⁵

Three fears were at the root of imperialist ambitions related to English expansionist efforts in the Shenandoah Valley.⁶ First, there was the very real fear of French encirclement. As the French expressed their own imperial desires by advancing down the Mississippi Valley, thus connecting Canada with Louisiana, and, as they laid claim to the vast interior of North America stretching from the Mississippi to the Appalachians, they essentially left England's claims in North America surrounded and drastically contained. A second fear supporting English westward expansion was the potential for wars with Amerindians or at the very least the threat of Amerindian raids into eastern Virginia. Such wars could easily destabilize England's colonies, so the board felt the need to determine methods and strategies to insure that such wars and raids did not materialize. A third and final fear supporting English expansion was the recognition that a certain internal threat existed in the colonies. Potential slave insurrections became a concern as England's southern North American colonies began to import an increasingly larger number of slaves each year. This situation led Spotswood

and other southern colonial governors to fear that, as slavery grew, so too did the potential for slave rebellion. This fear of internal rebellion, as well as the fear of French encirclement and Amerindian raids and possible war, came together to directly impact British imperial policy and to directly affect westward expansion in Virginia.⁷

While fear became the primary motivating factor behind governmental efforts to settle Virginia's backcountry, and while expansion into the regions west of the Blue Ridge relieved some of eastern Virginia's fears, this emotion and force in time directly affected the society that was taking shape in the region. Settlers in the region, who were in essence serving as human shields, found that the fear of Amerindian wars and raids dominated their society, more so than any threat from the French or the potential for slave insurrections. Slave insurrection was not a great concern among backcountry settlers due to the low number of slaves along the frontier, relative to eastern Virginia. When frontier settlers raised fears of the French, many times it was in relation to their alliances with Amerindian tribes that accompanied the French on raids along the frontier or that acted alone under French encouragement. A July 1754 letter in the Preston Family Papers relates how, between the tenth and twentieth of June, "Sundry Companies of . . . Indians" visited families living in Augusta County and "charged the People to remove off the Land otherwise it would be worse for them in a little time." The writer, whose name is illegible, recognized that the French were a threat because they "send them [Amerindians] out in Parties to savage amongst us." Similarly, James Smith's narrative describing his capture by Amerindians at the beginning of the French and Indian War notes that "it may be said by some that the French were also engaged in this war. True, they were; yet I know it was the Indians that laid the plan, and with small assistance put it into execution."⁸

Settlers along the western waters also generally considered the French as a more civilized enemy than the Amerindians, thus making the Amerindians the greater and more fearful overall threat. After a group of Amerindians captured James Smith along Pennsylvania's frontier in 1755, as he was helping to build a road between Fort Loudon and Braddock's road, the Amerindians forced him to run between two lines of warriors and receive a severe beating. Reflecting on the event in 1799, Smith makes a point to note that it was a French doctor in Fort Duquesne that gave him medical assistance. Shortly thereafter Smith observed "a small party [of Amerindians] coming in with about a dozen prisoners, stripped naked, with their hands tied behind their backs, and their faces and part of their bodies blacked; these prisoners they

burned to death on the bank of the Alleghany river, opposite to the fort. I stood on the fort wall until I beheld them begin to burn one of these men; they had him tied to a stake and kept touching him with firebrands, red-hot irons, &c, and he screamed in a most doleful manner; the Indians, in the mean time, yelling like infernal spirits.”

To Smith, the French were a source of aid while the Amerindians were a source of pain at numerous levels. Similarly, John Stuart’s “Memoir of Indian Wars,” which recounts his experiences with Andrew Lewis on the Point Pleasant Expedition in 1774 and provides a brief history of Greenbrier County, also reveals Amerindians as the force frontier settlers feared most. Stuart relates how Amerindians supporting the French captured Andrew Lewis as he accompanied British Major Grant on a reconnaissance mission near Fort Duquesne early in the French and Indian War. Only due to French intervention were the Amerindians prevented from carrying out their desire to execute Lewis. The Amerindians then stripped Lewis, leaving him wearing only his shirt, before he was taken into the fort. In the fort, “with the tomahawk drawn over his head,” an elderly Amerindian attempted to grab his shirt, and only after a French officer intervened did Lewis escape a second time with his life. The French officer then took Lewis into his room and gave him a complete set of clothes. In Stuart’s narrative, the French Amerindian allies offered death, while the French offered both salvation and comfort.⁹

The degree of fear settlers along Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley and its western waters experienced in relation to Amerindians did not begin to fully develop until the French and Indian War. Up until that point, with a few exceptions, settlers experienced a peaceful existence along the frontier as their Amerindian neighbors continued to move through the region hunting and possibly raiding other Amerindian tribes to the south or to the north. A notable exception, however, occurred in 1742 as between thirty and thirty-six Amerindians of the Iroquois Confederation traveled through the Shenandoah Valley “well equipped for War, pretending a Visit to the Catabaus.” While these primarily Oneida and Onondagas carried with them a pass to travel through Virginia’s backcountry from James Silver of Pennsylvania, their decision to move off the road and to visit “most of our Plantations, killing our Stock, and taking Provisions by force” created a situation that ended in bloodshed. The county lieutenant, James Patton, ordered John McDowell and James Buchanan to provide the Amerindians with provisions for which they would then later be reimbursed “at the Governments [*sic*] Charge.” Even though in a letter to Governor Gooch, Patton appeals

to the Law of Nature to suggest that it is within their right to “repel an Enemy force by force,” he then goes on to reveal that he clearly recognizes the danger of taking military action against the Iroquois since it could possibly result in a larger Amerindian war. He indicates to the governor that he instructed McDowell and Buchanan to basically ignore any damage the Amerindians might have inflicted on livestock and property by providing the Amerindians with provisions at no charge. Settlers in the Shenandoah Valley did not positively embrace Patton’s orders as they “upbraided our two Captains with Cowardice.”¹⁰

As the Amerindians moved along the frontier they continued to raise settlers’ concerns and inspire, albeit inadvertently, fear. Frontier tensions swelled and easily set the stage for armed confrontation, and in December 1742 a skirmish between frontier militia under Captain McDowell and the Amerindians unfolded. According to James Patton, as Captain McDowell and his men approached the Amerindian camp under a flag of truce, the Amerindians cried out, “O Friends are you there, have we found you?” and then opened fire. The first volley killed Captain McDowell along with six of his men. Captain Buchanan then took command and “bravely returned ye Compliment, and stood his Ground with a very few hands,” and after forty-five minutes “the Indians fled, leaving 8 of [their] men dead on the spot.” While Buchanan attempted to give chase, the Amerindians took refuge in a large thicket and escaped.¹¹

The Amerindian version of the skirmish denied that they opened fire unprovoked and that they had been routed. According to Conrad Weiser, whom the Pennsylvania governor sent to the Iroquois in order to hear their account of the skirmish and to reassure them that Pennsylvania meant them no harm, the skirmish began after McDowell’s militia fired one round at an Amerindian boy who had gone into the woods to possibly relieve himself. It appears that then the Amerindians returned fire which resulted in McDowell’s death, drew their tomahawks, and engaged the remaining frontiersmen in hand-to-hand combat. According to the Iroquois, ten whites fell dead and only four Amerindians died in the skirmish. Rather than the Amerindians losing the field and hiding in thickets, it was the militia that took flight, leaving the Amerindians to freely remove their dead, tend to their wounded, and begin to make their long trek home.¹²

The skirmish in the Shenandoah Valley in 1742, while not a major military engagement or a catalyst for a major Amerindian war, was significant, nonetheless, as it directly led to the opening of a new frontier that included Virginia’s western waters. In the summer of 1744 Iroquois and

whites met under more peaceful conditions at the Pennsylvania frontier town of Lancaster. The purpose of the meeting was to insure that the Iroquois and whites would remain at peace and to resolve land claims that included both the Shenandoah Valley and lands that primarily spanned across the mountainous region southwest and west of the Shenandoah Valley that contained Virginia's western waters. The Treaty of Lancaster allowed England to gain control of a vast frontier in exchange for two hundred pounds in both goods and in gold. With the treaty the Shenandoah Valley gained a degree of stability as the Iroquois recognized Virginia's settlement claims, and at the same time Virginia's government gained more land to settle and in turn was able to extend its buffer between eastern Virginia and the strategic threats (i.e., Amerindians and French) that inhabited North America. However, with the Ohio Valley arguably fitting within these new claims, tribes outside of the Iroquois Confederacy, such as the Delaware and the Shawnee, found their lands being ceded to the English without their permission. These Ohio Valley tribes became the largest threat to the Virginia frontier as the number of whites began to increase and threatened to expand into the Ohio Valley.¹³

The 1742 skirmish directly contributed to Virginia's ability to acquire and then settle the colony's western waters, and it helped to create the Shawnee threat that plagued the backcountry for several decades. However, there is another reason that the 1742 skirmish was significant to Virginia's backcountry history. In portraying events surrounding the skirmish to Governor Gooch in December 1742, James Patton touches on a theme that became central to Virginia frontier policies toward and relationships with Amerindians, and that was an important force in shaping Virginia's frontier society and contributed to social tensions along the frontier. Patton exposes the tension between backcountry settlers and the gentry that controlled the militia, the economy, and the realm of politics as his letter reveals the inability of the region's gentry to fully control the region's population as Iroquois warriors traveled through the valley. Patton's December 1742 letter to Governor Gooch makes it clear that the members of the militia were not in agreement with the gentry's decision to provide the Amerindians with provisions and to give them free passage. The militia and frontier settlers viewed the gentry as "cowards" because they dealt with the Iroquois in this manner. Frontier militiamen were not afraid to voice their opinions and show disrespect toward their "social betters" when the gentry did not embrace an aggressive stance toward Amerindians. If the Amerindian account of events is indeed accurate, that the whites fired first, just as their captain

was beginning to negotiate with the unwanted travelers, then the tension between the gentry and their subordinates is reinforced. If it is true that the militia opened fire on the Amerindians, resulting in the death of their captain, then it underscores the gentry's inability to fully control the militia and the militia's ease to abandon orders when they thought the gentry was following a line of action that went against the popular will.¹⁴ In either case, both the white and Amerindian accounts of the 1742 skirmish unveil tension between the gentry and the common folk as, at the very least, the settlers charged their social superiors with cowardice and, if the Iroquois version is accurate, even worse, that they opened fire on the Amerindians without being ordered to do so. With the outbreak of the French and Indian war, this tension was strengthened and became more evident.

Fear's Power and Influence

The relative peace Virginia's frontier experienced during its early years ended when French and English imperial dreams turned into a nightmare along the Ohio Valley in 1754. What became the last of a series of imperial wars fought between England and France for control over North America, the French and Indian War exposed the Virginia frontier to a style of warfare that fertilized the tension between the gentry and the common folk. What settlers viewed as horrific Amerindian raids along Virginia's western waters created a degree of fear among frontier settlers that was regionally unprecedented. As a result, many frontier settlers either fled the backcountry or they took refuge in one of the many frontier forts that began to materialize as the region's leaders tried to afford settlers some protection from attack. Typical was the case of the less than typical Mary Draper Ingles, who, upon returning to the New River Valley following her escape from Shawnee captivity and a forty-odd-day journey through the wilderness, took refuge in a small fort on the Roanoke River with her husband and other neighboring families. Mary felt uneasy staying at Vause's Fort due in large part to news that "Indians was making Depredations on the frontiers," and a feeling that Amerindians were in the immediate vicinity. Even George Washington had noted upon touring Virginia's frontier forts that Fort Vause was "in a much exposed gap" and recommended to Governor Dinwiddie that the garrison of the fort should be no less than 150 men. Possibly recognizing the potential danger his family might face by staying at the fort, and surely wanting to put his wife at ease, Mary's husband, William Ingles, decided to move her and himself east to the more secure region of Bedford County. Only hours after the Ingles removed themselves from the fort and headed

east, a combined force of French and Amerindians attacked the fort, and after a day-long engagement the French and Amerindians set the fort on fire and either killed or captured all of its inhabitants.¹⁵

Mary Draper Ingles covered the entire gambit of the horrors associated with living along Virginia's frontier during the French and Indian War. She experienced an Amerindian attack that left family and friends either dead or captured, experienced life as a captive, escaped and made her way back home, took refuge in one of the many frontier forts, and fled the frontier only to return when the region became more stable. Even though Mary Ingles was unique in that her experiences were so varied, she in many ways embodies the frontier experiences settlers underwent during this formative period. While many settlers were killed or were captured, the majority of Virginia's frontier settlers at the very least turned to a neighborhood fort during periods when attack seemed likely, or they temporarily, sometimes even permanently, fled the region and moved to an eastern county. Governor Dinwiddie drew attention to the exodus of frontier families when he addressed the General Assembly in the fall of 1755 following a series of Amerindian raids that had plagued the frontier throughout the spring and summer. Dinwiddie told the General Assembly that, due to "the great Terror of our back Inhabitants, arising partly from the horrid Barbarities of our brutal Enemies, and partly from the Misbehavior of many among our own People," the frontier had been left almost "desolate."¹⁶

The decision of frontier families living along the frontier to remove themselves from the region *en masse* proved to be quite frustrating to Virginia's eastern political leaders as the strategic purpose of the frontier, to serve as a buffer between eastern Virginia and aggressive Amerindians and French forces, all but evaporated. When Dinwiddie informed the General Assembly that the Amerindians were only partly to blame for the troubles the frontier was experiencing, he drew attention to his opinion that also to blame for the frontier's predicament was the "Misbehaviour of many among our own People."¹⁷ To Dinwiddie, many of the horrors backcountry settlers experienced was a result of their inaction and reluctance to defend their families and the region from Amerindian attack. Just as Amerindians were to blame for the region's problems as they were the force that continually raided the region, so too were the settlers themselves to blame as they failed to perform in a manner eastern political leaders thought appropriate.

George Washington, serving as commander of the Virginia Regiment between 1755 and 1759, continually reported to Governor Dinwiddie instances of insubordination among frontier militiamen and how the militia

continually failed to provide any type of effective defense against the Amerindian threat. On the eve of Dinwiddie's remarks to the General Assembly, Washington wrote Dinwiddie and informed him that he "was desirous of proceeding immediately, at the head of some Militia, to put a stop to the Ravages of the Enemy; believing their Numbers to be few; but was told by Colo. Martin, who had attempted to raise the Militia for the same purpose, that it was impossible to get above 20 or 25 Men; they having absolutely refused to stir."¹⁸ Over a year later, Washington continued to express his frustration with the militia to Governor Dinwiddie as he informed the governor that the garrisons of the frontier forts were "want of men." He went on to state that at Dickinson's Fort (also Dickerson's Fort) a group of "Indians ran down, caught several children playing under the walls, and had got to the gate before they were discovered." Washington went on to ask, "Was not Vass's [Vause's] Fort surprised and a good many souls lost, in the same manner?" The frontier forts tended to "keep no guard, but just when the enemy is about . . . nor ever stir out of the forts, from the time they reach them, till relieved on their month being expired; at which time they march off, be the event what it will. So that the neighbourhood may be ravaged by the enemy, and they not the wiser."¹⁹ With such dispatches arriving from Washington, Dinwiddie formulated an unfavorable opinion of the way in which the frontier inhabitants were defending themselves against Amerindian and French aggression, an opinion that he had formulated and made quite clear in his remarks to the General Assembly as early as the fall of 1755.

Even as Washington condemned the militia for ineptness, he identified a possible reason quite unique to the region that helps to explain the militia's ineffectiveness along the frontier. In his October 11, 1755 letter to Governor Dinwiddie, in which he informs the governor that he could not muster enough men to pursue some Amerindians in the area, he points out that the men were "choosing as they say to die, with their Wives and Family."²⁰ As Amerindian raids could materialize, settlers feared, anywhere and at anytime, unlike the more secure areas to the east, many frontier patriachs refused to fully fulfill their militia duties in order to stay with their families and afford them some protection. Desertion, insubordination, and outright refusal to fulfill militia responsibilities tended to plague frontier militia companies as patriachs feared for their families' safety and as they worried about their own economic stability. Albert Tillson has convincingly argued that tension between settlers and gentry became quite pronounced within the militia. As in the east, a culture supported by idealized deferential

relationships between gentry and common settlers materialized along the frontier just as settlers began to move into the region and as new counties began to take shape. As in eastern Virginia, large landowners held a political and economic hegemony over the frontier as they controlled land distribution, local politics, the militia, and established a variety of advantageous economic relationships with other settlers that ranged from tenant farming to wage labor. While slavery was not as firmly established along Virginia's backcountry as in the east, generally it was the gentry that owned slaves and indentured servants. Through conspicuous consumption, political and military power, their ability to control land distribution, and economic relationships with laborers, the gentry strengthened their hegemony over the region and attempted to create and reinforce a culture of deference. Just as arguably a truly deferential culture never existed in the east, the ideal of deference based on aristocratic or oligarchic leanings did follow the gentry west as they moved into the region.²¹

However, as the 1742 skirmish in the Shenandoah Valley suggests, and as the French and Indian War highlights, increasingly the culture of deference the gentry idealized came under assault as frontier settlers openly challenged the gentry over issues related to policies dealing with Amerindians. Due in a large part to different perceptions about Amerindians and the threat, both potential and real, that they offered, common settlers found the frontier militia a venue through which to air their frustrations. Generally, the settlers found it difficult to distinguish between friendly and unfriendly Amerindians. The common folk emphasized the need for dramatic action as opposed to seemingly tedious and ineffective militia duties, such as serving as a garrison at a fort or patrolling a region hoping to stumble across an enemy raiding party. They tended to be more apt to respect and respond favorably toward neighborhood elite leaders as opposed to disassociated provincial leaders who lacked personal relationships with the men. While the gentry tended to have a strategic outlook, the common settlers tended to think locally. They found the eastern militia system inadequate in dealing with unique frontier military situations, and they did not want to abandon crops and family to sit in a fort or to patrol a region only in the hopes of making contact with the enemy.²²

Fear's Manifestation

As the Shawnee raided the Virginia frontier between 1754 and 1775, they were so successful at waging psychological warfare that not only did large segments of the population move from the region but such tactics

created a frontier of fear as rumors of Amerindian raids began to affect frontier settlers just as much as actual Amerindian attacks. Because of "An inconceivable Panick which prevailed amongst the people" along the frontier, George Washington posted an advertisement that appeared in the fall of 1755 around Winchester. The advertisement, due to "divers timorous persons [who] run through the Country and alarm its inhabitants by False Reports, of the Indians having attacked and destroyed the Country, even Winchester itself," attempted to assure settlers that "the Indians who committed the late Cruelties . . . are returned Home." The advertisement continues to almost plead for "all my Countrymen, not to be alarmed on every false Report they may hear . . . but to keep to their Homes and take care of their Crops." As Washington observed in an October 1755 letter to Governor Dinwiddie, "I believe they [frontier settlers] are more encompassed by Fear than by the Enemy."²³

The spread of rumors and the fear that actual attacks inspired among settlers along the frontier sometimes led to military maneuvers that later proved embarrassing to officers. In October 1755, Washington related to Governor Dinwiddie an account of a situation in which he was personally involved that nicely illustrates the roles rumor and fear played in affecting the frontier during the French and Indian War. Washington noted that at eight in the evening a dispatch arrived informing him that a group of Amerindians had been spotted twelve miles from his position, and "that the Inhabitants were flying in the most promiscuous manner from their dwellings." Washington reacted by putting the guards on alert and by sending two men "well acquainted with the Woods" to advance toward the Amerindians in order to "see if they could discover the Numbers and Motion of the Indians, that we might have timely notice of their approach." The following morning a second dispatch arrived "ten times more terrified that the former," informing Washington that the Amerindians were now within four miles of his position and that they "were killing and destroying all before them." The messenger related to Washington how "he himself had heard constant Firing, and the Shrieks of the unhappy Murder'd!" Washington immediately assembled a force of forty-one men, made up of both rangers and the militia, and proceeded to march "directly to the place where these horrid Murders were said to be committed."²⁴

Washington's response, while militarily sound and appropriate, proved to be unwarranted and unneeded. Upon arriving at the place in which the messenger alleged the Amerindians were wreaking havoc, Washington and his men found only "3 drunken Soldiers of the Light-Horse, carousing, firing

their Pistols, and uttering the most unheard-of Imprecations." There were no Amerindians, only obnoxious and loud drunken soldiers. Washington took these men prisoner and marched them back to his camp. He subsequently learned that the "Amerindians" that had been allegedly spotted and that sent the region into a general panic were only "a Mulatto and Negro, seen hunting of Cattle by his Son [Isaac Julian], who alarmed the Father, and the Father the Neighborhood." Washington related this story to Dinwiddie in order to "shew what a panick prevails among the People; how much they are alarmed at the most usual and customary Crys."²⁵

Fear's Assault

While the incident involving mistaken identity and drunken soldiers illustrates the power rumors held along the frontier and how rumors could cause officers to embarrassingly mobilize their forces and advance against a non-existent enemy, Washington informed Dinwiddie that there was another reason he related this story to him. Not only did the story highlight the "panick that prevails among the People," but it also revealed "how impossible it is to get them to act in any respect for their common Safety's." The situation along the frontier as Amerindians raided the region caused soldiers serving in the militia to forgo larger concerns and focus on the immediate safety of their families and property. With Amerindians mutilating men's, women's, and children's bodies in a manner to suggest that ultimately their families would meet a similar fate, frontier men became hesitant to serve in the militia if it meant their being absent from home for an extended period. Washington told Dinwiddie that, when Colonel Fairfax arrived in the frontier town of Winchester following the panic sparked by the spotting of two individuals taken to be Amerindians and the drunken behavior of a few soldiers, the colonel sent word to a frontier militia captain to bring his men immediately to Winchester. The captain, however, "with coolness and moderation" replied "that his Wife, Family and Corn was at stake; so were those of his Soldiers; therefore it was not possible for him to come."²⁶ In this instance an officer in the militia refused the orders of his superior due to his desire to protect his family and property and his recognition that his men wanted to do the same.²⁷ Insubordination, whether coming from the common militia soldiers or from militia officers, was rooted in their fear that their families and property were in danger as Amerindian terrorist tactics proved successful. The Amerindians' practice of psychological warfare directly caused militiamen to become insubordinate, to desert, and to challenge not only the ideals the gentry held about the culture of deference

that they believed was so important to the Virginia social order, but also to challenge basic military codes of conduct.

Whether real or imagined, fear gripped backcountry settlers as terrorist tactics and psychological warfare took their toll. This fear caused settlers to show insubordination toward their local and regional leaders as those leaders dealt with Amerindians in a manner that appeared weak and ineffective to the common folk. While desertion, insubordination, and refusal to perform their duties in the militia clearly undermined the deferential culture the gentry was attempting to create and maintain along the frontier, as well as basic military codes of conduct, one incident in particular revealed how weak that culture was and how threatened the gentry's desired hegemony was throughout the region. This incident, revolving around the murder of six friendly Cherokee just north of Staunton in the shadow of Pontiac's Rebellion, brought about the clear recognition that in regard to Amerindian affairs the common folk were willing to directly assault the gentry's authority and even threaten outright rebellion.

In May of 1765, as a band of Cherokee made their way across Virginia's backcountry, a mob made up of twenty to thirty settlers attacked the group and murdered six of their members. The gentry viewed the Amerindians as friendly, and Andrew Lewis had given them a pass that was to afford them some protection. The mob of "Villainous bloody minded Rascals," however, viewed the Cherokee visitors as a potential threat as they possibly mistook them for Shawnee. Lewis believed the mob's allegations to be insincere as he informed Lieutenant Governor Fauquier that the mob "could not make out anything like a proof that they were other than Cherokee." Gentry and popular opinion clashed as the mob attacked the group of Amerindians; however, the events following the arrest of some of the leaders of the murderous mob showed to what degree popular sentiment and the gentry diverged in regard to Amerindian policies. After local justices apprehended two of the mob's leaders, to the gentry's consternation, one prisoner was rescued before he made it to the jail. A mob of over one hundred men overwhelmed the guards at the jail and "with Axes broke the prison Door" and freed the second individual implicated in the murder of the Cherokee, clearly expressing their unwillingness to support the gentry's authority over the matter and their attempts to bring the guilty to justice. The mob, referring to themselves as the Augusta Boys, then demanded that the gentry pardon the alleged murderers and subsequently put forth a proclamation claiming Lewis was "not attached in heart to his present Majesty or his liege Subjects." The reward offered for the capture of Andrew Lewis, William

Fleming, and William Crow further revealed popular resentment toward the gentry and their unpopular Amerindian policies which could inspire outright rebellion.²⁸

Andrew Lewis also claimed in his letter to Lieutenant Governor Fauquier that Peter Hogg, a member of the gentry, wrote the Augusta Boys' proclamation, even though it appears that Hogg had ulterior motives or, at the very least, that Lewis was trying to justify why someone of Hogg's station would be involved with the perceived rebels. Lewis mentioned that Governor Dinwiddie had relieved Hogg of his command, which was done on the advice of George Washington. Even though Hogg later received a command over a band of rangers, he seems to have been, in the eyes of Lewis, somewhat incompetent. Lewis also suspected that Hogg had joined "the Banditti . . . for the sake of making himself popular amongst the Disaffected with a view to increase the number of his Clients." In supporting the mob, presumably consisting of a majority of common folk due to their large numbers, numbers too large to allow for them all to have been gentry, and because Lewis viewed them as banditti, "Villainous bloody minded Rascals," and murderers, Hogg was bowing to the will of a large number of individuals in the hopes of finding economic advantages. Lewis's offering such thoughts about Hogg's involvement with the Augusta Boys implies that class tensions were involved in the controversy. Lewis's remarks suggest that a man of Hogg's station was an exception to those tied to the Augusta Boys. As Albert Tillson observes, Hogg was simply an upper valley leader attempting to gain popularity by embracing a cause supported by a large number of the common folk. In this way the tension between gentry and common folk was intensified as some members of the gentry began to break ranks and support popular causes.²⁹

A proclamation Fauquier issued on May 13, 1765 strongly suggests that there was popular support for the Augusta Boys. Fauquier offered a one-hundred-pound reward to anyone who was able to apprehend and secure "each of any two who shall be proved principal Promoters and Ringleaders in the said Murders"; immunity to anyone who made "full Discovery of the principal Actors," so long as the individual was not one of the actual murderers; and a reward of fifty pounds "for every one of the others who was aiding and assisting therein." No one in the region seems to have been motivated to turn against the Augusta Boys in order to collect such a substantial reward because two years later, in the fall of 1767, Fauquier wrote in a letter to John Stuart that "there is not the least probability of bringing the Offenders to Justice."³⁰

Further evidence that the Augusta Boys had the popular support they needed to thwart the gentry's attempts to find justice for the Cherokee is found in two reports Fauquier submitted to the Board of Trade. In June 1765, a little over one month after the attack against the Cherokee, Fauquier wrote the board expressing concern "that the Paxton Boys of Pennsylvania have sent a Message to our people that if they are not strong enough to rescue any of their Party who may be apprehended, they will come to their Assistance, for they say no man shall suffer for the murder of a Savage." In August, Fauquier informed the board that the Carpenter, a representative of the Cherokee who had met with Fauquier and the council in order to learn about how the colony was going to bring justice to the Augusta Boys, might be ambushed in Augusta County on his return home. Fauquier considered but decided against forming a body of militia to escort the Carpenter, recognizing that, if the Carpenter did not return by a certain deadline, the Cherokee would presume that he had been killed and a war could result. Fauquier was also concerned about sending an escort since "we could not tell on whom to rely, the populace of all the upper Counties being so inveterate to all Indians friends or foes, and desirous (I fear) of an Indian War." Fauquier went on to state that "if the party should be attacked and the Escort not do their Duty, it would inevitably bring on a general national Rupture, and if they should, it would be setting one part of the Colony to cut the Throats of the other, and sow the seeds of Discord which might bring on a kind of civil War." No ambush materialized and the Carpenter made his way home safely, but the threat of support for the Augusta Boys both internally and, in the form of the Paxton Boys, externally, clearly reflected the general consensus that the Augusta Boys had acted in a manner completely acceptable.³¹

The assault on the ideal of deference, beginning most forcefully with the French and Indian War, began to shape the gentry's Amerindian policies as they tried to balance a more aggressive policy that settlers advocated with maintaining a strategic outlook that distinguished between friendly and unfriendly Amerindians. More importantly, this assault also led many of the gentry in the region to drift toward the Patriot movement as the colonies moved closer to and then entered the Revolution. While constitutional issues, the Baptist revolt, relationships with British merchants, and even patriarchal rage pushed the eastern elite toward revolution, the increasingly, albeit not entirely, racist view toward Amerindians among backcountry settlers that in turn created tension between common settlers and the gentry pushed the frontier elite to favor ideals associated with the Patriot movement.³²

Albert Tillson's work *Gentry and Common Folk* argues convincingly that pressure on the frontier gentry from the common settlers pushed the gentry toward the Patriot cause. Disrespect and insubordination directed toward the gentry within the militia particularly created tensions that caused the gentry to move toward rebellion in order to gain respect and deference. Tillson places much emphasis on "popular localism," suggesting that attachments with individual neighborhoods more than anything else structured political alliances and served as a means through which an assault on deference unfolded.³³ Localism was arguably central to the common folk's cosmology, evinced through their reluctance to embrace any form of strategic outlook along the frontier since they typically focused only on concerns related to individual neighborhoods. However, it does not fully explain the passion behind their willingness to challenge their social, political, and military superiors, especially as the gentry retained so much economic power over the region through their controlling access to land and many times markets. Local attachments, and a different economic outlook, were not necessarily strong enough in and of themselves to bring what was at times nearly outright rebellion against the gentry. However, attitudes toward a perceived savage and barbarous enemy who brutally murdered, mangled, and tortured men, women, and children along the frontier were strong enough to fuel the common folk's anger, resulting in a significant assault on the gentry when they perceived gentry policies toward the Amerindian threat as ineffective. The roots of popular localism and the primary force behind the common folk's general insubordination along the frontier rested squarely on the backs of Amerindians and their reliance on terrorist tactics. In order to maintain their hold over the common folk, many of the backcountry elite at times embraced an aggressive policy toward the Amerindians. Later, as British policy, reacting to the Amerindian threat, restricted economic development along the frontier, leading some to believe that the British were in league with the Amerindians, they, as Tillson argues, embraced the Patriot cause.

As Washington and local militia officers continually complained, it was often difficult to put together a force of men to patrol the backcountry or garrison a fort. The "popular localism" that Tillson suggests existed among backcountry settlers was actually more pronounced than Tillson argues in that settlers were more concerned with defending their personal homes than their neighborhoods, much less the entire region. If they were going to die, frontier settlers wanted to "die, with their Wives and Familys," and not while defending a fort or on patrol away from their homes. It is quite likely that many settlers recognized how fruitless such efforts were in being

able to successfully defend the frontier. This sad predicament was quite obvious to the region's military leaders, including Washington, so average militiamen must have been sensitive to this situation as well. Washington's letter to Dinwiddie in the fall of 1756 mentions the general awareness along the frontier that the militia and provincial army offered them little protection. Washington informed the governor that "the wretched and unhappy situation of the inhabitants needs few words. . . . They [frontier settlers] are truly sensible of their misery; they feel their insecurity from militia preservation, who are slow in coming to their assistance, indifferent about their preservation, unwilling to continue, and regardless of every thing but their own ease."³⁴ That so many men simply refused to serve reflected their belief that such maneuvers were a waste of time and only served to leave their families and property exposed to attack.

Fear's Force

The gentry found more success with bringing frontier settlers under control and moving closer to their ideals about a deferential society when they created a plan of action that appeared militarily sound and that afforded frontier settlers a real opportunity to seek revenge against the Amerindians. As Washington informed Dinwiddie, and as many frontier settlers recognized, "defensive measures are evidently insufficient for the security and safety of the country." A few months later Washington informed Dinwiddie that "our frontiers are of such extent, that if the enemy were to make a formidable attack on one side, before the troops on the other could get to their assistance, they might overrun the country." The region was simply too large to patrol, and the frontier forts were generally unsuccessful at preventing Amerindian raids. Also of concern to Washington was "what it must cost the country to build these forts, and to remove stores and provisions into them." As such, Washington recommended to the governor that the proper course of action in dealing with the threat to the frontier was to launch "a vigorous offensive war, in order to remove the cause." Rather than allowing the Amerindians to retain the initiative, Washington suggested that Virginia's forces should "endeavor to remove the cause" or else "we shall be as liable to the same incursions seven years hence as now; indeed more so." To Washington, the key to protecting the frontier was not found through the construction and garrisoning of frontier forts and relying on ranger patrols to randomly traverse the countryside searching for Amerindian raiding parties. The way in which the frontier could best be protected was by taking the war to the enemy that was inciting and supporting the Amerindian

terrorist actions. The Amerindian villages from which raids originated and the French forts that supported and encouraged the Amerindian raids plaguing the frontier had to be erased. Otherwise, as Washington informed the governor, "they [the French] will have the entire command of the Indians, and grow stronger in their alliance; while we, by our defensive schemes and pusillanimous behaviour, will exhaust our treasury, reduce our strength, and become the contempt of these savage nations, who are every day enriching themselves with the plunder and spoils of our people."³⁵ To Washington, the Virginia government needed to adopt a policy of preemption and erase forces that threatened the frontier before they grew stronger, rather than simply defending an almost indefensible region and allowing the enemy to retain the initiative. Frontier settlers tended, under certain circumstances, to break with their localism and embrace this form of strategic outlook.

The gentry along Virginia's western waters, in line with Washington's appraisal of their situation, did not always favor allowing the Amerindians to determine where and when engagements would occur. At times the gentry attempted to take the war into enemy territory by putting together an expedition to attack the Shawnee villages from which Amerindian raids were originating. While strategically sound, these expeditions still revealed underlying tensions between frontier settlers and the gentry. Insubordination remained a problem as Virginia forces marched toward enemy villages; however, the fact that such expeditions materialized and that they found enough volunteers to attempt an invasion of enemy territory, suggests that such decisive action on the gentry's part coincided with the popular will. In January 1776, William Christian, William Preston, and Arthur Cambell, all part of the frontier elite, suggested their concern with meeting the demands of the common folk when they wrote a petition for reimbursement of their expenses related to the expedition against the Shawnee in late 1774, known as Dunmore's War. William Christian related how, on the eve of Dunmore's War, Governor Dunmore had sent him to the frontier in order "to prevent the flight of the inhabitants" as an "Indian War" loomed on the horizon. Christian was "to give an assurance to the people that the War should be carried into the enemies country" so that possibly the settlers would stay along the frontier and not take flight. Christian implies strongly that the popular will supported offensive wars because they knew that such actions would force the enemy to become preoccupied with defending their own villages and therefore not be able to raid the frontier. However, upon Christian's return to the frontier, as was so often the case, the common folk were already in a state of panic and he found that "numbers fled from their homes and

it was feared a great part of the country would be evacuated.”³⁶

Just launching an offensive action against Amerindians was not enough to insure stabilizing the culture of deference. If under-supplied or ill-planned, insubordination, desertion, and even threats of mutiny easily plagued the militia as the gentry moved their troops into and through enemy territory. Such was the case in February 1756, when Major Andrew Lewis assembled a body of troops, containing both frontier militia and eighty Cherokee, in order to march against the Shawnee. The expedition began by having to release some of its forces, including forty Cherokee and sixty rangers, in order to react to a Shawnee raid that left two settlers dead and resulted in the theft of several horses. The released forces arrived too late to engage the Shawnee, and the distraction caused the expedition to get a late start. On February 19, 1756, the expedition began to advance toward the Shawnee villages in the Ohio River Valley. The weather and fatigue took their toll on the troops, which was all made worse as the force consumed all of its food supply. The soldiers had to resort to killing some of their horses in order to prevent starvation. Such conditions were not favorable to keeping morale high, and talk of desertion began. At one point, William Preston's entire company threatened to desert, and, only after appealing to them at a personal level, did his company remain with him. However, when the soldiers reached Sandy Creek, after Andrew Lewis attempted to persuade the troops to continue on their way and warned them about the fate of soldiers who deserted or committed mutiny, almost the entire expeditionary force abandoned Lewis and began to make their way home. While Albert Tillson suggests Lewis's poor leadership skills and authoritarian attitude brought about the failure of the expedition, arguably the fatigue the soldiers experienced as they marched over extremely rough and wooded terrain in winter played an important role in the soldiers' decision to head back home. That they ran out of food and were reduced to eating their horses only made their decision all the more easy.³⁷

Lord Dunmore's War, fought against the Shawnee in 1774 and culminating in the Battle of Point Pleasant, witnessed a better-supplied, better-supported, and overall more successful attempt to carry the war into the enemy's country. As Christian relates in his 1776 petition, beginning in the spring of 1774 fear and anxiety over a possible war with Amerindians increased. Due in large part to the murder of eight to ten Shawnee, including the murder of the Shawnee war leader Logan's sister on May 3, 1774 by a party of Virginians, a delicate peace with the Shawnee began to unravel. The fact that one of the Virginians used the language of the

“middle ground” and scalped the dead Shawnee did not help matters as the action sent a clear message to the Shawnee that this was indeed an act of war. Even though Shawnee chiefs attempted to restrain their warriors and keep peace, by summer the *Virginia Gazette* was reporting “that there has been a smart Skirmish, on the Branches of New River, between a Party of white People, who were out surveying Lands, and a Number of Indians.” The skirmish, the general fear that an all-out war with the Shawnee was imminent, and “the alarming Behaviour of the Indians” continued to send the frontier settlers “in Motion . . . determined to drive from among them so cruel and treacherous an Enemy.” One week later the *Virginia Gazette* reported “that the Shawanese Indians have openly declared their Intention of going to War with the white People, to revenge the loss of some of their Nation who have been killed; that they had scalped one of the Traders, and detained all the rest who were in their Towns.” While not entirely accurate, as it was the Shawnee war leader Logan and not the entire Shawnee nation that was waging war against Virginians, the results were the same. Governor Dunmore arrived along the frontier “endeavouring all in his power to repel those hostile and inhuman savages,” and took command of a body of troops that he led toward the Shawnee villages from which the Virginians believed the raids were originating.³⁸

Once the expedition was on its way, the gentry generally found, compared to the Sandy Creek Expedition almost two decades earlier, that the troops were more manageable and less likely to desert and show insubordination. As John Stuart recalled in his “Memoir of Indian Wars,” the expedition “consisted chiefly of young volunteers, well trained to the use of arms, as hunting, in those days, was much practiced.” Stuart proudly relates that these young men’s victory at Point Pleasant produced a victory in which “it was never known that so many Indians were ever killed in any engagement with the white people.” The Battle of Point Pleasant brought the Virginians a victory over the Shawnee that they had sorely wanted for two decades.³⁹

The Battle of Point Pleasant represents a culmination of twenty years of frontier warfare along Virginia’s western waters. Adjusting to a popular will directly challenging them as a result of the Amerindians’ use of terrorist tactics, the gentry were able to successfully launch a preemptive strike against the Shawnee and inflict a significant defeat. Gentry officers, with the possible exception of Andrew Lewis, were able to lead their forces to victory, albeit not a complete victory, due to Dunmore’s decision to enter into negotiations with the Shawnee. This action prevented Lewis’s men from

following up their victory and attacking the Shawnee villages in the Ohio River Valley. This decision on Dunmore's part, while securing Kentucky for Virginia when the Shawnee "agreed not to hunt on this side the Ohio," allowed the Shawnee to remain a threat to the Virginia frontier through the Revolution. Just eight months after the Battle of Point Pleasant, the *Virginia Gazette* reported that "the inhabitants on our frontiers are under just apprehension of a renewal of an Indian war" with the Shawnee as a result of "the delay of the ratification of the late treaty of peace concluded upon by his Excellency the Governour." Of course, by the time the article appeared, the governor was preoccupied with the larger problem of the colonies' open rebellion against British authority.⁴⁰

Fear's Legacy

The American Revolution did not bring an end to the culture of fear that had gripped the region since the French and Indian War. If anything, the frontier of fear became more pronounced as the Revolution produced a new seemingly hidden enemy that could, just like Amerindians, strike anywhere and at anytime, often using similar terrorist tactics as this enemy struck non-combatants and families along the frontier. Tories, as much as Amerindians, terrorized, or threatened to terrorize, the backcountry throughout the Revolution. Not until the end of the Revolution, as the Tory threat was neutralized and the frontier began to move further west, removing the Amerindian threat from the region, were settlers along Virginia's western waters able to relax and to concentrate on making the region more stable. The frontier of fear that had shaped the culture along Virginia's western waters for over a generation moved west as Americans began to conquer the continent.

The culture of fear had a lasting impact on the region. In many ways this culture, shaped by Amerindian terrorist-style tactics, sat at the center of the history of Virginia's backcountry between 1742 and the 1790s. It was fear that produced mass movements of settlers unlike any other force known to the region's inhabitants. It was fear that created an environment in which common folk not only challenged established leaders, but they also undermined the efforts of the region's gentry to effectively combat Virginia's enemies and to establish the buffer eastern political leaders had so wanted. It was in this manner that fear helped to both propel eastern political figures to advocate westward expansion and to heighten their level of frustration and anxiety. Fear propelled mass European movements both west and east as eastern leaders advocated the planting of settlers first in the Shenandoah

Valley and then along Virginia's western waters. Then fear led many of those settlers to take flight and head further south or back east. It was also fear that created a mentality of preemption among frontier inhabitants. Rather than allowing Amerindians to retain the initiative and strike whenever and wherever they wanted throughout the region, settlers increasingly favored striking at the heart of the enemy and carrying the war to distant villages. In essence, the region was founded on fear and then shaped by it.

It was possibly the way in which a preemptive mentality developed along the frontier that most dramatically impacted the region as this mentality has a relationship with the American Revolution. While fear brought about social tensions that helped to demonstrate to the gentry that their idealized deferential culture was clearly not possible and that they did indeed have to listen to the popular will, while fear brought about a demographic impact on the region as it helped shape settlement patterns and movements, and while fear produced a society driven by rumor as much as by fact, the preemptive mentality gave some in the region a way in which to better understand the American Revolution and a reason to support the Patriot movement. As the British government put forth the Proclamation of 1763 and as Amerindian raids continued to occur throughout the backcountry, the frontier settlers increasingly came to distrust the British government. Through this distrust emerged support for those advocating armed rebellion against the Crown.

According to John Stuart, just as hostilities were taking shape along the backcountry during the spring and summer of 1774 on the eve of the Point Pleasant expedition, "disputes between the British government and the colonies began to run high, on account of the duties upon tea imported into this country; and much suspicion was entertained that the Indians were urged by the British agents to begin war upon us, and to kill the traders then in the nation." To Stuart "it is well known," suggesting a general lack of trust of the British among settlers, "that the Indians were influenced by the British to commence the war to terrify and confound the people" so that the colonies would be unable to unite and oppose "Parliamentary measures to tax the Americans." That the British government's representative, Governor Dunmore, failed to allow Andrew Lewis to march on Shawnee villages and end the Shawnee threat only added to their suspicions about Britain's alleged relationship with the Amerindians. Stuart provided further proof of Dunmore's illicit dealings with the Amerindians as he relates in his memoirs that on the eve of the battle an enemy Amerindian yelled "halloo, with abusive terms in English, that they had eleven hundred Indians, and two thousand

coming.” Coincidentally, eleven hundred was the number of men with Stuart, and Stuart’s forces believed “that Colonel Christian was advancing toward their position with two thousand more men.” Stuart believed that the only way the Amerindians could have obtained such precise intelligence was if it had been “communicated to the Indians by the Governor’s scouts.” In this way, referring to the Battle of Point Pleasant, Stuart suggests that “this battle was, in fact, the beginning of the revolutionary war.”⁴¹

As British policies directed toward the backcountry undermined the economic development of the region through the Proclamation of 1763, resulting in a halt to further westward expansion, and, as terrorist style Amerindian raids continued to unfold along Virginia’s western waters, with the French no longer being identifiable as the inciting agent of such depredations, frontier settlers increasingly linked their problems to the British. In essence, to men like Stuart, the American Revolution became at its most basic level a preemptive strike against the British in order to prohibit them from being able to supply and encourage Amerindians to raid the frontier. Fear and its accompanying preemptive mentality were quite possibly both at the root of the Virginia backcountry’s settlers’ understanding of the Revolution and a significant force behind the Patriot movement as it gained strength throughout the region.

Notes

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- 1 Ralph M. Brown, “A Sketch of the Early History of South-Western Virginia,” *William and Mary Quarterly Historical Magazine*, 2nd ser., 17, no. 4 (Oct. 1937), 506.
- 2 For two complementary, yet at times contradictory, accounts of the Draper’s Meadows Massacre, see John Ingles, *Escape from Indian Captivity: The Story of Mary Draper Ingles and Son Thomas Ingles as Told by John Ingles, Sr.*, edited by Roberta Ingles Steele and Andrew Lewis Ingles (Radford, VA: Commonwealth Press, 1969); and Letitia Preston Floyd, “Letter to her son Rush, February 22, 1846,” Filson Club Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky. The details surrounding the murder of Draper’s children come from Letitia’s account of the massacre. For an examination of how the story of Mary Draper Ingles and the Draper’s Meadows Massacre has evolved, see Ellen Apperson Brown, “What Really Happened at Draper’s Meadows? The Evolution of a Frontier Legend,” *Smithfield Review: Studies in the History of the Region West of the Blue*

- Ridge 7 (2003): 5-21. Also see F. B. Kegley, *Kegley's Virginia Frontier* (Roanoke: Southwest Virginia Historical Society, 1938), 210; and David E. Johnston, *A History of Middle New River Settlements* (Huntington, WV: Standard PTG Pub. Co., 1906), 19-21.
- 3 Ingles, *Escape from Indian Captivity*, 8; Floyd, "Letter to her son Rush"; Conway Howard Smith, *Colonial Days That Became Pulaski County* (Pulaski, VA: B. D. Smith & Bros. Printers, 1975), 36; and William Preston to William Peachey, microfilm, reel 5, folder 984, Preston Family Papers, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg.
- 4 According to Title 22 of the US Code, Section 2656f(d), "terrorism" involves "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombattant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience." This definition reflects the way in which Amerindian groups in the region waged war with frontier settlers during the 18th century. As J. Frederick Fausz notes in his History News Network essay, "The First Act of Terrorism in English America" (see <http://hnn.us/articles/19085.html>), even though the term "terrorism" did not enter the English vocabulary until the 1790s, 18th-century Europeans understood the act in ways that we do today. Also, see Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2008).
- 5 Warren R. Hofstra, *The Planting of New Virginia: Settlement and Landscape in the Shenandoah Valley* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 64-77.
- 6 These fears are related to why the Board of Trade and the Virginia colonial government found it advantageous to encourage settlement in the Shenandoah Valley. Of course, those that actually settled the region sought economic opportunities, freedom to practice their religious beliefs, and all of the other motivations that brought settlers to the New World.
- 7 Hofstra, *Planting of New Virginia*, 70-77.
- 8 See B. Scott Crawford, "Economic Interdependence along a Colonial Frontier: Capitalism and the New River Valley, 1745-1789" (master's thesis, Old Dominion University, 1996), 31-33; and B. Scott Crawford, "The Transformation of a Frontier Political Culture: Blacksburg's Early Experience, 1745-1870," in *A Special Place for 200 Years: A History of Blacksburg, Virginia*, edited by Clara B. Cox (Roanoke: Progress Press, 1998), 142-43; Letter Dated July 1754, reel 2, folder 135, Preston Family Papers; and Samuel G. Drake, *Indian Captivities or Life in the Wigwam; Being True Narratives of Captives Who Have Been Carried Away by the Indians, from the Frontier Settlements of the United States, from the Earliest Period to the Present Time* (Auburn, AL: Derby and Miller, 1852), 184, 259. Slave owners in the New River Valley made up only, on average, approximately 10% of the taxable population between 1782

and 1790, with the average slaveholder owning only 2.5 slaves. The largest slaveholding estate in the New River Valley, William Preston, listed only 22 taxable slaves in 1790. Compared to eastern Virginia plantations, where by 1782 approximately 78% of the households in Charles City, James City, and Warwick Counties in eastern Virginia owned slaves, with many estates owning numbers of slaves in the hundreds, backcountry plantations had relatively few slaves.

- 9 Drake, *Indian Captivities*, 180-81, 184; John Stuart's "Memoir of Indian Wars and Other Occurrences," in *Collections of the Virginia Historical Society*, v. 1; new series, v. 1-11 [Richmond: The Society, 1833-1892], 52.
- 10 James Patton to William Gooch, Dec. 23, 1742, reel 2, folder 12, Preston Family Papers; Albert H. Tillson Jr., *Gentry and Common Folk: Political Culture on a Virginia Frontier, 1740-1789* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1991), 49. For a detailed description and discussion of the 1742 skirmish between Virginia and Iroquois forces, see Hofstra, *Planting of New Virginia*, 1-49.
- 11 Patton to Gooch, Dec. 23, 1742.
- 12 Hofstra, *Planting of New Virginia*, 46-47.
- 13 Ibid., 172-77.
- 14 Tillson, *Gentry and Common Folk*, 49. Tillson even points out that, five years after the skirmish, one individual suggested that McDowell had actually encouraged the Amerindians to attack the backcountry settlers.
- 15 Ingles, "Escape from Indian Captivity," 19; Ellen Apperson Brown, "Portrait of a Survivor: The Long and Eventful Life of Mary Draper Ingles," *Smithfield Review* 7 (2004): 58; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 29, 1756, Item #19771; *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*, v. 1 edited by John C. Fitzpatrick (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931), 490-99.
- 16 *Virginia Gazette*, Oct. 31, 1755; Smith, *Colonial Days*, 27-28.
- 17 *Virginia Gazette*, Oct. 31, 1755.
- 18 *Writings of Washington*, 200-1. For a detailed examination of disobedience along the frontier within the militia, see Tillson, *Gentry and Common Folk*, 45-63.
- 19 *Writings of Washington*, 494.
- 20 Ibid., 200-1.
- 21 For the culture of deference so much a part of eastern Virginia's political culture, see Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982). For the ways in which this culture of deference extended into Virginia's backcountry, see Tillson, *Gentry and Common Folk*; Crawford, "Economic Interdependence"; Crawford,

"Transformation"; Turk McCleskey, "Across the First Divide: Frontiers of Settlement and Culture in Augusta County, Virginia, 1745-1770" (PhD diss., College of William and Mary, 1990); and Turk McCleskey, "Rich Land, Poor Prospects: Real Estate and the Formation of a Social Elite in Augusta County, Virginia, 1738-1770," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 98 (July 1990), 452, 462-63. For the creation of a backcountry elite, see David Hackett Fisher, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 642-50. For a counterargument to the issue of deference, see Michael Zuckerman, "Tocqueville, Turner, and Turds: Four Stories of Manners in Early America," *Journal of American History* 85, no.1 (June 1998), 13-42. Michael Zuckerman illustrates nicely that deference probably never existed in colonial America due primarily to its frontier climate, just as Tocqueville and Turner have suggested in the 19th century. However, the concept of deference should not be discarded. The social tension that Zuckerman acknowledges did exist during the colonial period came about because those with material wealth expected but did not receive deference. Possibly architecture best reflects the gentry's obsession with the deferential ideal as pre-Revolution architecture is power-based and post-Revolution architecture, as evinced by Monticello, is more democratic.

- 22 See Tillson, *Gentry and Common Folk*, 45-63.
- 23 Writings of Washington, 201, 208-9. For an examination of the extent to which rumors affected the South Carolina backcountry during the panic of 1751, see Gregory Evans Dowd, "The Panic of 1751: The Significance of Rumors on the South Carolina Cherokee Frontier," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., vol. 53.3 (July 1996): 527-60. Dowd argues that along South Carolina's backcountry extremely anxious situations emerged as rumors of possible Amerindian attacks surfaced. Reflecting a more modern strategic outlook, the Cherokee, like the Iroquois during the French and Indian War, many times used rumors to play on South Carolina's backcountry settlers' fears in order to advance their own agendas. As in Virginia, many times newspapers fueled rumors as they reported them along with "facts."
- 24 *Writings of Washington*, 203-4.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 204-6.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 204.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 201.
- 28 Matthew C. Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry: The Seven Years' War in Virginia and Pennsylvania, 1754-1765* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), 255-56; Tillson, *Gentry and Common Folk*, 49, 182n19; Andrew Lewis to Francis Fauquier, May 9, 1765, in *The Official Papers of Francis Fauquier, Lieutenant Governor of Virginia 1758-1768*, v.3 edited by George

- Reese (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983), 1234; Lewis to Fauquier, June 3, 1765, 1248; Lewis to Fauquier, June 5, 1765, 1254; and Enclosure: Proclamation of the Augusta Boys, ca. June 4, 1765, 1255, all in *Papers of Fauquier*.
- 29 Lewis to Fauquier, May 9, 1765, in *Papers of Fauquier*, 1234-35; Lewis to Fauquier, June 5, 1765, in *Papers of Fauquier*, 1253-54; and Tillson, *Gentry and Common Folk*, 68.
 - 30 Proclamation, May 13, 1765, in *Papers of Fauquier*, 1237; Fauquier to John Stuart, Nov. 21, 1767, in *Papers of Fauquier*, 1516.
 - 31 Fauquier to the Board of Trade, June 14, 1765, in *Papers of Fauquier*, 1257; Fauquier to the Board of Trade, Aug. 1, 1765, in *Papers of Fauquier*, 1266.
 - 32 For the Baptist assault on deference in the east, see Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia*. For Tillson's reflections on the Fincastle Resolutions, see Tillson, *Gentry and Common Folk*, 79-80. For the impact the gentry-merchant conflict had on the Patriot movement, see T. H. Breen, *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of the Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985). For patriarchal rage, see Kenneth Lockridge, *On the Sources of Patriarchal Rage: The Commonplace Books of William Byrd and Thomas Jefferson and the Gendering of Power in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1992). For issues related to racist views directed toward Amerindians among backcountry settlers, see Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors*. Silver demonstrates that, during the French and Indian War, increasingly the division among European groups along Pennsylvania's backcountry became less defined as the Indian common enemy tied ethnic and religious groups in an unprecedented manner. Part of this unifying force produced a language that began to distinguish settlers from their Indian foes, and friends, by race. However, while this force was taking shape in the 1760s and 1770s, Silver notes that it was not until after the Revolution that truly racist behavior became evident.
 - 33 See Tillson, *Gentry and Common Folk*.
 - 34 *Writings of Washington*, 201, 495.
 - 35 *Ibid.*, 496.
 - 36 Petition of Colonel Christian, Jan. 3, 1776, reel 5, folder 912, Preston Family Papers.
 - 37 Smith, *Colonial Days*, 32-34; Tillson, *Gentry and Common Folk*, 51-52.
 - 38 Petition of Colonel Christian, Jan. 3, 1776, reel 5, folder 912, Preston Family Papers; *Virginia Gazette*, June 2, 9, and Aug. 25, 1774; Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 357-65.
 - 39 Stuart, "Memoirs of Indian Wars," 48-49.

- 40 Ibid., 57; *Virginia Gazette*, Jan. 26 and June 23, 1775.
- 41 Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry*, 257; Stuart, "Memoirs of Indian Wars," 43, 49, 56. The monument the Daughters of the American Revolution erected over Andrew Lewis's grave perpetuates this portrayal of the Battle of Point Pleasant as marking the beginning of the American Revolution. The epitaph reads: "Pioneer Patriot. Hero of the Battle of Point Pleasant which was the most closely contested of any battle ever fought with the Northwestern Indians; was the opening act in the drama whereof the closing was played at Yorktown."